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HUMAN RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

ARGENTINA: ISSUANCE OF IAHRC REPORT

SOURCES: BA 3255; press

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Exclude ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

(U) The IAHRC report written on the basis of a September 1979 visit to Buenos Aires has been ~~releae~~ released. While the Commission planned to distribute its findings during the week beginning April 21, the Argentine government published the report's conclusions in Buenos Aires on April 18 and on April 19 distributed a communique with the official GOA reaction.

(U) The sections of the report published in Argentina concluded, inter alia, that government security agents have been responsible for illegal detention, torture, and murder, ~~that has~~ resulted in "thousands of disappeareds". The government's reply "categorically" rejected the Commission's charges, arguing that the IAHRC failed to consider a level of terrorist activity "whose magnitude and consequences explain and justify the measures...adopted to defend society, and which never exceeded a reasonable response...."

~~INR~~ INR Comment: Both the conclusions of the 400-page report and the official reaction were as expected. ~~Actually~~, the Argentine was somewhat more restrained than might have been anticipated early this year when government officials were stunned by the severity of the original IAHRC draft. At that time, for example, there were many who argued that Argentina's only viable option was to pull out of the OAS. That the Argentines have not done so and have published the ~~IAHRC~~ IAHRC's conclusions can be attributed

to:

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—changes made in the IAHRC's original draft; Argentine

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officials who have read both the draft and the final ~~report~~ version reportedly consider the latter an improvement, albeit still a "bad" report; the removal of the names of alleged torturers was one change considered important in Buenos Aires;

--a revived sense of self-confidence in international dealings that has emerged since January due, among other things, to improved relations with the US and success in evading public condemnation at the March UNHRC sessions in Geneva; and

--the fact that the government had published the US Human Rights Report earlier this year; failure ~~to~~ also to publish the IAHRC findings would have added credence to the report's conclusions.

INR/IAA: J. Buchanan

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